

This Week In Agriculture

July 14, 2006

July 2006

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Upcoming events

July 15: U of I Moscow Weed Tour (7:30 am registration, University Inn Best Western, Moscow) Contact Donn Thill, (208) 885-6214

July 29: Owyhee County Cattlemen's Association annual meeting. Held in Silver City.

Check out the local farmers markets from Bonners Ferry to Boise to Idaho Falls and plenty in between. <http://www.idahoag.us>.

This Week in Agriculture is a publication of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

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Cherries kick off Idaho fruit season

The first of the summer tree fruits are cherries. Now Idaho cherries are at their juicy best.

Idaho ranks 5th in the nation for sweet cherry production.

Idaho cherries are of the "sweet cherry" family, which includes the well-known dark Bing cherry, and lesser known Van, Chapman and Larian varieties.

Idaho also raises lighter-skinned varieties such as Lambert, Rainier, and Royal Ann cherries. These delicious fruits are in season for only a few short weeks and are now at their sweetest and plump-est through mid-July.

Cherries are grown throughout Idaho, but most commercial production occurs in Canyon, Gem, Payette and Washington counties. This year, producers in the Gem state will harvest

more than 6 million pounds of sweet cherries worth more than \$4.5 million.

Not only are Idaho cherries delicious, but they also contain nutrients including pectin, which helps control blood cholesterol levels; vitamin C, beta-carotene, potassium and antioxidants, a potential inhibitor of cancer.

Cherries contain no fat and are low in calories giving you a sweet fix without the extra calories in other desserts.

Don't miss out on this sweet summer treat. Idaho cherries can now be found at local farmers markets or direct from



growers at local u-pick orchards.

Or look for the Idaho Preferred™ signs at your local Paul's Markets, Albertsons, Wal-Mart or Winco to make sure you are buying the "Pick of the (cherry) Crop from Idaho!



ISDA Director Pat Takasugi discusses organizational changes at a recent department meeting.



Plant and Animal Industries administrators Tom Dayley and Greg Ledbetter serve ice cream floats at the department meeting held July 10.

Agencies release groundwater report

Two state agencies conducting groundwater assessments in Washington County have concluded that a local aquifer continues to be impacted by nitrate contamination. The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) have released a report on the water nitrate problems near Weiser.

ISDA, IDEQ, and Southwest District Health are working to minimize further ground water contamination and possible health risks.

A summary of the report is available on the ISDA website at <http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/Environment/water/gwReports.php>.

The report is called "Assessment of Water Quality in the Sunnyside Area, Washington County, Idaho: 2006 Update."

The summary focuses on ground water quality of the aquifer underlying the area just southeast of Weiser.

Twenty-four domestic wells have been sampled since 2002 and twelve monitoring wells have been sampled since 2004. According to the report, 58 percent of the wells sampled in November 2005 tested above the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Maximum Contaminant Level for nitrate of 10 mg/L. The maximum concentration detected was 48 mg/L.

AgrAbility Helps Keep Farmers Growing

It can happen in seconds—like getting caught in machinery or falling—or it can happen over months or years, when the stiffness from arthritis is no longer bearable or you're no longer able to hear conversations.

Disabilities can take many forms, as can the tools available to help you deal with any disability or impairment. United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) of Idaho has many years of experience working with such tools, known as assistive technology.

Assistive technology can range from a simple hand truck used to move bales of hay and other items, to a hydraulic lift for a tractor that allows someone with limited mobility to keep tilling fields. Any device, whether available commercially or



modified, that increases, maintains, or improves the functional capabilities of a person with disabilities is considered assistive technology.

The Idaho AgrAbility Project, a cooperative effort between UCP and the University of Idaho, offers assessment services to help farmers, ranchers, or their family members with disabilities learn more about the assistive technology available for their specific circumstances.

The Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP) conducting an assessment can also provide information about possible funding sources.

UCP of Idaho also plans

to start a peer network of farmers and ranchers, or their family members, with disabilities who are willing to talk to other people facing the same challenges, either via phone or email.

Sharing experiences is a great way for people with disabilities to come up with new ideas and to learn about available products and services.

To volunteer to participate in the peer network, to schedule an assessment, or to obtain more information, please contact UCP of Idaho at 208.377.8070 or toll free at 888.289.3259.

You can also email UCP at info@ucpidaho.org.

Eurasian Watermilfoil treatment underway

Several projects to treat Eurasian watermilfoil on Idaho's lakes and waterways have begun. The Legislature approved \$4 million to combat the milfoil problem in Idaho.

Eurasian watermilfoil is a particularly aggressive noxious weed. It establishes itself quickly and a fragment the size of a postage stamp is all that's needed to establish a new infestation. Milfoil fragments moved from lake to lake can also start new infestations.



Photojournalists are taken on an Ada County lake to get a closer look at the milfoil problem.